

REMARKS

The following comments address all stated grounds for rejection, and we believe place the presently pending claims in condition for allowance. Claim 27 has been amended and no claims have been canceled in this Response, and thus, upon entry of this paper, claims 1-6, 9-13, and 15-34 are presently pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

Rejections

Rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 11-13, 15-20, 22 and 24-26 pursuant to §103(a) as being unpatentable over White et al in view of Sotomayor et al

The Examiner indicated that claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 11-13, 15-20, 22 and 24-26 were rejected pursuant to §103(a) as being unpatentable for obviousness over White et al (U.S. Patent No.: 5, 933,490, hereafter White '490) in view of Sotomayor et al (U.S. Patent No. 5, 708, 825 A, hereafter Sotomayor '825). For the reasons set forth below, the rejections are respectfully traversed.

White '490 discusses a load balancing method for dial up access to the Internet. The method allows for redirected access for an ISP (Internet Service Provider) attempting to connect to the Internet backbone. An Internet Service Control Point redirects calls to alternate lines in the event of overload situations. Calls are re-directed based on preferences stored by the ISP combined with dynamically compiled call information (see col. 4, line 3 – col. 5, line 12). The request being responded to is an access request prior to the establishment of an Internet connection.

Sotomayor '825 discusses the automated identification of significant topics, concepts and phrases in documents and the creation of summary pages for the documents. Sotomayor '825 also discusses the automatic creation of hyperlinks between the identified key topics. A semantic analyzer program examines user selected documents to automatically identify key topics within the document, compile

the topics into summary pages, and generate presentation pages by segmenting the selected documents into smaller pages. Hyperlinks are embedded in the summary pages to the topics in the presentation pages. Sotomayor '825 does not include a redirection facility that is an intermediary.

The Examiner cited White '490 as teaching all of the elements of the claimed invention for the independent claims 1, 19 and 25 with the exception of the element of accessing a semantic value associated with a hyperlink (which the Examiner indicates is disclosed by Sotomayor '825 and which is discussed below). The Applicant respectfully disagrees that any of the elements of the independent claims are disclosed by White '490. Claim 1 (and claims 2-5 which are dependent thereon), and the corresponding medium claim 19 (and claims 20-21 which are dependent upon claim 19) include the step of "receiving a user request to access information regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink at a redirection facility, said redirection facility being an intermediary performing redirection of said request and having more than one possible target profile for each request." The request that is received by the redirection facility is a user request regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink. As the Examiner admitted, White '490 does not explicitly teach or disclose the step of accessing a semantic value associated with a hyperlink. It also does not teach or disclose the other elements of the step. Specifically, the request in White '490 is not a user request. The user request (which does not involve a semantic value and is a connection request, not a request to access information) is made to the ISP for Internet access. The ISP then contacts the backbone access provider for access to the Internet.

The second step in claims 1 and 19 is the step of identifying a user preference regarding which service provider to service the request. The request in question is the one related to the accessing of information regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink. As noted, this element is lacking in White '490. Additionally, the request in claims 1 and 19 is a user request and the preference is a user preference. White '490 involves an ISP request following a user request and an ISP preference, not the preference of the user who has no stake in how the connection to the Internet is made beyond it being made in a timely manner. The request in White '490 is a request from the ISP following a request from the user.

The third step of claims 1 and 19 requires the directing of the request from the redirection facility to a user for forwarding to a service provider for servicing of the request, said request modified based on the user preference. White '490 does not redirect the request to the service provider via the user but rather connects the ISP to the Internet backbone without the involvement of the user.

Sotomayor '825 does not supply the missing claim elements noted above. While Sotomayor '825 discusses the creation of hyperlinks based upon an analysis of semantic values in a document (as opposed to the receipt of a request to access information regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink), it completely lacks the intermediary that performs the redirection as that term is used in the present invention.

The claimed invention employs a user interface which recognizes user input and makes a request of an intermediary, the redirection facility. The purpose of the intermediary is to redirect the user's browser to one of multiple possible destination (target) systems. The claimed invention redirects queries to other systems after modifying the query based on user preferences and other data. The modified query is returned to the requesting user which then contacts the service provider appropriate for the modified request. The redirection facility does not directly retrieve the data. The redirection facility is an intermediary between the originating client process and the requested services (See Figure 1 and the corresponding discussion and the remaining detailed description section of the Application).

It should also be noted that in addition to lacking the elements of the claimed invention, the combination suggested by the Examiner suffers from a number of technical drawbacks that make it not feasible and therefore not an obvious combination and/or a non-operative combination. As noted previously, Sotomayor '825 teaches an automated extraction of semantic values and link creation in documents on a site. In order to perform this extraction process, the redirection facility of White '490 would have to access each of the thousands of potential redirection targets, extract millions of potential semantic values from the target sites on a continual basis, and somehow use this information to determine a redirection

target. There are a number of difficulties with such a method including the fact that redirection targets would be limited to those targets accessible to the agent doing the automated extraction of semantic values. Conflicting business relationships, copyright laws, access restrictions, and security considerations would thus sharply limit the number of available targets. An additional difficulty is that the combination of White '490 and Sotomayer '825 would have terrible scaling properties. It would be effective only for small numbers of targets or small ranges of semantic values. Similar problems are present if White '490 and Sotomayor '825 are combined to use of the system of White to resolve the embedded links created by Sotomayor '825. But the same difficulty discussed above would ensue, the redirection facility would need an advanced control signaling facility which would not be in place for most if not all of the users.

In contrast the present invention requires only the messaging capability embedded in the HTTP protocol. A user preference profile contained in an HTTP cookie is used to determine the redirection target, and allows the redirection facility to function efficiently in situations where there is no possibility of accessing the content at the target site. The present invention functions without access to means of monitoring the availability of a semantic value at a target, or even the availability of the target site. Additionally, the present invention is scalable as thousands of targets can be handled with minimum difficulty.

Independent claim 25 (and claim 26 which is dependent thereon) requires that the initial request be received from a user selecting a hyperlink. Neither White '490 nor Sotomayor '825 include this element. Additionally, the request is modified by an intermediary and redirected to the computer system via the user. As discussed above, neither White '490 nor Sotomayor '825 discusses the use of an intermediary which modifies a hyperlink selected-request and redirects it to the computer system via the user. Sotomayor '825 has no intermediary performing redirection and the redirection-performing intermediary of White '490 does not return the modified request to the user prior to the resource being retrieved.

The Examiner also rejected independent claims 9 and 22 based on the same combination of White '490 and Sotomayor '825. The Examiner indicated that White

'490 included all of the elements of the claims except for the element of receiving link information regarding hyperlinks and the forwarding of link information, elements which the Examiner indicated were taught by Sotomayor '825.

Claim 9 (and claims 10-16 which are dependent thereon) and the corresponding medium claim 22 (and claims 23-24 which are dependent thereon) both require the intermediary to perform redirection of a hyperlink-based request via the requesting user. As previously noted, the intermediary of White '490 does not redirect the request via the user and the request is not a hyperlink based request. Sotomayor '825 does not use an intermediary to perform re-direction and creates hyperlinks rather than receiving hyperlink-based information in a request.

The Examiner also rejected independent claims 6 and 17 based on White '490 in view of Sotomayor '825. Independent claims 6 and 17 (and claim 18 which is dependent upon claim 17) requires the receipt of a user request to access information regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink at the redirection facility/server. As noted previously neither reference includes a user request to access information regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink. Sotomayor '825 analyzes semantic values to create hyperlinks but does not receive a user request with a redirection facility/server. Independent claims 6 and 25 also both require the directing of the modified request from the redirection facility/server to the user for forwarding to the service provider/resolution service for servicing of the request. Neither of the cited references return a modified request from the redirection facility/server to the user for forwarding. Additionally, independent claims 6 and 17 require the identification of a second service provider/resolution service to use to service the request and the redirection of the request to the user for forwarding to the identified second resolution service/second service provider upon the failure of the resolution service/service provider to fully service the request. As discussed, neither White '490 nor Sotomayor '825 identify a second service provider/resolution service to service a request regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink.

Since all of the dependent claims include the elements of the independent claim upon which they are dependent, and since the combination of White '490 and

Sotomayor '825 lack elements of each of the independent claims, claims 1-6, 9-13, and 15-26 are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Rejection of claims 27-34 pursuant to §103(a) as being unpatentable over White et al in view of Gerace

Independent claim 27 and claims 28-34 (which are dependent on claim 27) were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to §103(a) as being unpatentable over White '490 in view of Gerace (United States Paten No.: 5, 991, 735 A, hereafter Gerace '735). Gerace '735 was cited by the Examiner as teaching the determination of whether to present an advertisement to the requestor based on examined criterion. Claim 27 has been amended to include the limitation that the request be a user request to access information regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink. As noted previously White '490 and Sotomayor '825 lack this element. The newly added element is also not taught by Gerace '735. Accordingly, Applicant requests the withdrawal of the §103(a) rejections directed to claim 27-34.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants contend that claims 1-6, 9-13, and 15-34 presently pending in the application are patentable and in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants request the allowance of the application. We invite the Examiner to call the undersigned at (617) 227-7400 if the Examiner deems there are any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS SHOWN

Please amend claim 27 as follows:

27. (twice amended) In an environment having a redirection facility for redirecting a selected request from a requestor for a given resource to a service provider, a method of advertising, comprising:

receiving the selected request at the redirection facility, said request being a user request to access information regarding a semantic value associated with a hyperlink, said redirection facility being an intermediary performing redirection of said request and having more than one possible target profile having information used to resolve each request;

examining a criterion at the redirection facility;

determining whether to present an advertisement to the requestor based on the examined criterion.